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*The Dada state of mind denies a formula and invites free thinking for art and life. Dada themes match my own visual research repertoire, rich in media text provocation, fragmentation, subversion, chaos, change, individualism, nihilism—indeed, all that is boomboom to quiet complacency and stalwart stagnation. It is Dada's core technique of the objectivity of chance that invited and inspired this manifesto in celebration of 100 years of Dada, an experiment with deconstruction/(re)construction as realized in Jean/Hans Arp's *papiers déchirés* and coaxed by Tristan Tzara's poetic challenge. The resultant word collage is intended as visual art reflected as random rhetoric. It is my academic life's work, which screams DADA! DADA! DADA!*

**Marjorie Yambor**

**A**ttack the senses. Overwhelm the mind. Engage the spirit. Such is the (anti)goal of Dada. The Dada movement (which some argue “never existed”) kicked up in the spring of 1916 in a beer parlor in Zurich. German poet Hugo Ball established Cabaret Voltaire and was joined by personalities Hans Arp, Richard Huelsenbeck, Marcel Janco, and Tristan Tzara—with others to come. Featuring subversive sculptures, poems, paintings, exhibitions, demonstrations, and manifestos (and later evolving into scandalous festivals that incensed attendees and resulted in riots), the “activity of Dada was a permanent revolt of the individual against art, against morality, against society” (Ribemont-Dessaignes, 1981, p. 102).

The death and destruction of World War I waged and prompted resistance. As Huelsenbeck (1981, p. 23) relates,

None of us had much appreciation for the kind of courage it takes to get shot for the idea of a nation which is at best a cartel of pelt merchants and profiteers in leather, at worst a cultural association of psychopaths.

And so Dada was born, characterized by a nomenclature of nonsense, captured with a title that means nothing and signifies everything. Although no explicit exercise existed for Dadaism, the ultimate undertaking was to “undermine the edifice of bourgeois conventions [via] mainly three instruments: Humor, Paradox, and Scandal” (Schwarz, 1973, p. 17). The Dada

state of mind denies a formula and invites free thinking for art and life; the Dada themes match my own visual research repertoire, rich in media text provocation, fragmentation, subversion, chaos, change, individualism, nihilism—indeed, all that is boomboom to quiet complacency and stalwart stagnation.

Challenging all that is asleep and aloof, Dada's “bruitist poetry; automatic writing; the sexual, anticlerical, revolutionary impetus; exploitation of the unconscious, of randomness and chance” take art to the next level (Lippard, 1971, p. 8). It is this core technique—the objectivity of chance—that invited and inspired this manifesto in celebration of 100 years of Dada, an experiment with deconstruction/(re)construction, as realized in Arp's *papiers déchirés* and coaxed by (the very charming) Tzara (1977, p. 39):

Take a newspaper.

Take a pair of scissors.

Choose an article as long as you are planning to make your poem.

Cut out the article.

Then cut out each of the words that make up this article and put them in  
a bag.

Shake it gently.

Then take out the scraps one after the other  
in the order in which they left  
the bag.

Copy conscientiously.

The poem will be like you.

And here you are a writer, infinitely original  
and endowed with a sensibility  
that is charming . . .

And so it happened. Excerpts from almost two decades of work totaling a desired word count were printed onto paper, cut into strips, thrown into a box (for additional affection, the shipping box that carried custom doctoral regalia), shaken and stirred (like an indecisive and noncommittal martini), and then pulled one by one to be typed in sequence. The resultant word collage is intended as visual art reflected as random rhetoric. It is my academic life's work, that screams DADA! DADA! DADA!

a playful prelude...

the past > toys—visual, structural, tangible.  
Legos. Lincoln Logs. Tinker Toys. Pick-up Sticks.  
Sit N Spin. bored groans cured by board games.  
fasttoofast forward > screens, pixels, unnatural  
light. scroll scroll tap. scroll scroll tap. scroll scroll  
tap. REPEAT! mindbend, mindspin, mindmelt.  
old school. new school. no school. headache.  
concentration, attention, distraction . . .  
distraction . . . distraction. can't hear the birds.  
can't see the squirrels. can't feel the breezes.  
academy of the angry. this is a table. no. this is a  
boat. it's a table. no. it's a boat. this table is not a  
boat! (self-doubt: IS this table A BOAT?!) meow  
mau mau: save me—MAUWOOWOO!



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something spectacular is about to unfold. artful alienation via self-destructive body images in shifting capitalist contexts. the walking canvases of tattoo culture carry the confidence to inscribe their skin with their experiences of misery, ecstasy, and victory. photo collection captures the verve of forgotten pulp-fiction figures as vivified in scrupulously staged sessions. DEXTER. Debord's spectacle: accumulation as representation of lived life. sadistic sabotage > memoirs > bound in sandpaper. think ink. denotative definitions of signs, connotative constructs of signs. to complement the text and capture the delicate details as well as the liberal landscape. the visual voice offers a sense of calm contemplation and cautious consideration with an ulterior undercurrent of urgency to protect its livelihood and life. the ruling class of society constructs and circulates ideas which secure its power. subjective nature of what is "violent" and what is "art." relations of domination built on consent rather than coercion. animated, deviant, gendered, grotesque bodies. Chisungu (shame, transformation, initiation). the body is a site of meaning that unveils internal dreams and demons that reel and rage inside everyone. forums, image boards, 4chan, anon, reddit. liberation, complements the mental with the physical/emotional . . . mind/body unity, intellect. even people—provoke a stark and somber contrast to the solely scenic shots. life is a series of somatic celebrations for which aesthetic accoutrements convey pleasure and play. Marx: production schema reflects cultural schema. the photographs lure the "reader"—the voyeur—into an intersection of interaction, interpretation, and (perhaps, for merry measure) just a tinge of insurrection. hair, eyes, pallor, attire, romantic, fetish, cyber, steampunk. offers only glimpses of possibility, locked in liminal space. body as a site of meaning, dynamics of excess/power/knowledge, shifted codes. fusion of science fiction, musical. horror. visual constructions simultaneously spotlight and subvert privileged portrayals of contemporary beauty while also reinforcing and recalibrating normative expectations of gender. silent, visual, primitive form of self-spectacle via vehicles. TATTOO EMPORIUMS. the adorned rather than the average bodies in culture surface as the dynamic doyens who forge the fortitude to wear their life histories on their skin. pursues an alternative public space that encourages emotional freedom. memes as an idea, behavior, style, or usage that spreads from person to person within a culture, repetitive. repeat. grotesque body (inside out body as ritual, social, political communicator).



transformational spirit (disintegration of social, religious, political hierarchies). capital consumes life, more life. prompts a playful predisposition. destructive body is life's symbol for growth and change, privileging the insane body, privileging the destructive body. freemium model. animation is powerful imagery that images a potential shattering of the patriarchal mind/body split. living museum of passion as female jewelry/liberation, male ability/domination. deviant body in support groups and fight club. focused on acceptance of contradiction, imbalance, irony. what constitutes "violence" and "art" is a subject of cultural construction, conversation, and even contention. ALL ABOUT THE BOOMBOOM. under which the domination is invisible and feels proper, even natural. domestic hegemonic unit of the family. PREZI. aligns traditional influences of horizontal scrolls and folding screens from Japanese culture with contemporary concepts of mind mapping and rhizome liminality from media-studies culture; such an evolution mirrors the impacts of social media and multitasking on modern thought and communication. emotional escapade sprinkled with imaginative imagery. mass-produced, engineered identities. sin on skin as mastery of pain, fear, excess, impulse. aesthetic/conduct via animated, deviant, gendered, grotesque bodies. role as basic unit of socialization, status indicator. gendered body in desexualized women and emotional men. infatuation. imagination. illumination. DADA

DADA DADA!!! are you still here? lending latitude to the lives of paperback illustrations. a monster-fur top hat, afire with orange and yellow, ignites sunshine smiles on the faces of every stranger it passes on the Las Vegas strip. recollection of a Merrie Melodies cartoon. SOUTH PARK. some sections lull with easy explanations while others launch into edgy emotions; slow streams intermingle with rough rapids. aggression, defined as relational—such as defaming, bullying, or isolating, causing social harm. the magnificent musty scent of a library book, leaving the reader rejuvenated by the ride. emotional emancipation suggests emotional excesses. disrupts mind/body dichotomy. such mythical musings summon a spark of imaginative splendor, which so often resignedly rests on the sidelines of maturity. bedizened in black vinyl, fencenet stockings. actual = identity is mental/physical/emotional, complex and dynamic. revolution. Gisaro (nostalgia, emotion, singing, dancing). decorated bodies that drink audio and symbolize the soul. men, collective mourning in support groups and consumption as feminization, knowledge of gender models, power over normalized gender. relinquishing the corporate costume and reorienting the ideological code. a faux-fur hat forms a pile of cotton candy atop the head and transforms winter-gray moods into spring-carnival amusement as it travels through the Detroit airport. driving identity: dramaturgy of stick-figure-family decals. collective concept of "violent artistic expression." AMERICAN HORROR STORY: FREAK SHOW. ritualistic rites. contextual media aesthetics . . . angle, color, lighting, shot composition, camera angle. docile bodies as objects to be trained, normalized, controlled. Charleton Heston, Moses himself . . . irrational, fanatical, evasive, detached. adjusting patriarchal perspectives. portfolio of publicity pieces showcases a spectrum ranging from recognizable, traditional carnival components to conceptual, fantastical human distortions. reads much like a river flows. knowledge as escape from capitalism and power as explosion of capitalism. virginal deflowering (lipstick brand, recitation/dance, balloons bursting, grape jelly spiked with cayenne powder). Foucault. consumerism critique > Marxism: production as alienation. reorient manifestations of power/knowledge and envision alternative approaches—privileging decoration, emotion, immaturity, and destruction—to being-in-the-world: the essential/performative self. make visual the internal experiences. A POP CULTURE KALEIDOSCOPE OF SOMATIC SENTIMENT. it is a contextual kickoff, which possesses the power to mist the eyes if one agrees to submit to the sentimentality situated therein. perfectly poised at a pivotal historical juncture.

fantastic freakish fusions. tenuous transformation recognizes third wave balance of career/family, political/personal, public/private. Gramsci, hegemony, spontaneous consent. negotiated constructions—blind. convergence of humans and animation. power as ubiquitous > disciplinary power and normalizing judgment, oppressive yet productive potential to induce pleasure and form knowledge. firmly fluid, shifting and evolving within contexts of stylized, glamorized, fetishized, and aestheticized being-in-the-world. production as alienation, fetishism of commodification. devoted to the dynamics between the environment and people. subcultural site that contrasts the decorated body and the blank body. domestic dysfunction. framing fate. nonlinear canvas on which ideas ignite, integrate, and interplay. discusses and discredits manifold mythologies. the psychotic sidekick advocates escaping the spectacle of consumption culture. **ROCKY HORROR**. black and white photographs. visual adventure to accept the challenge of the image, to locate the potential of the visual, to decode the emotion of the vision, and to revel in the retinal recital. with all of its vim, poise, and toys, the body manifests the power of lived experience. dada. the attendant anecdotes—emphasized visually yet integrated thematically—convoke the colorful compilation of personalities and perspectives. creates artistic elements in the media text that prompt predictable patterns of audience reception. media: modern, technological, timely. pictures of dams, headgates, pipelines, power plants. meanings found in similarities and differences among signs within a larger cultural system. a blonde bombshell, the peek-a-boo bottom curve of her breasts beckoning as she suggestively raises her nude-pink pullover—ogles onlookers through the die-cut door. carnival dimension. spirited surface . . . social catalysts and consequences. ritualistic regalia: exaggerated make-up, latex/sequined corsets, lace gloves, platform heels, wedding/martian attire, black tails/sunglasses, white bras, slips, underwear, fishnet hosiery, garter belts, bobby socks. knowledge of visceral violence, power of grotesque liberation. **ALLY MCBEAL**. Goffman: dramaturgy. (re)interpret and (re)integrate moments of popular, peripheral, and political culture—driving identity in a different direction. symbolic interactionism. the more abstract imaginings are written on the physical form in straightforward character visualizations from the show as well as subversive freakish fusions outside the narrative. graffiti of the soul as persona, signifying heritage, emotion, immortality. images evoke the essence of timelessness, ironically illustrating the not-so-distinct debates surrounding the delicate balance of nature and culture. fetishism of



commodification. acknowledges and embraces emotion. ancient, magic, timeless. foregoing the visual vapidness of the khaki culture, they inscribe the physical form with all the vitality of the soul and parade what normalizing judgment negates for most. Naven: transvestism, gender play. the caricatured characters of *Ally Mcbeal* integrate reason and intellect with emotion and embodiment. subverts contemporary conceptions of the disciplinary gaze that proposes bodies should be conformist, rational, mature, and docile. escape the confines of patriarchal poise and embrace emotional expression. the animated cutouts of *South Park* juxtapose the fetiparous physical and the mature mental. the power of immature bodies that locate logic. specifically, though, individual interpretations instruct popular perceptions that legitimate some works as art while others remain ignored. regalia, razzmatazz, and red lipstick. aesthetic archetypes, cultural conventions, and human motivations. emotional bodies that reveal life's impulses. **FIGHT CLUB**. destructive bodies that release life's banality. an iris-purple and black petticoat engulfs the legs in a boundless sea of ruffles as it bounces through a New York subway station, eliciting immediate giggles and Saturday-night shoutouts of celebration. **DA FUNK PHENOMENON! DA FUNK PHENOMENON! DA FUNK PHENOMENON!** mingle and mold their own missions outside of the outline to which their narratives obligate them. use value vs. exchange value. verbal (such as yelling, ridiculing, or threatening—causing psychological harm) and physical (such as hitting, stabbing, or shooting—causing bodily harm). fangs, fishnets, and filigrees. grotesque body in death/rebirth cycle, enlightened pain via the lye hand kiss and subversive homework assignments. liminal = identity is adhesive/reductive/duplicative, casual and idle. hyperanimated, nihilistic, sexual, and reactionary bodies and narratives privilege the

childish body, the immature body, and replaces adult absurdity with kid clarity. social relationships via mediated images, art that provokes action, blurring of boundary between virtual and actual. replaces illegitimate illusions with emancipating experiences. the most banal daily duties—a mosquito bite, shaving, blotting a cut, preparing breakfast, flossing, tying shoes, putting on a shirt—evolve as diabolical delights. recognize the ritual-media link. uniformity, conformity, and perhaps even a deformity of spectacle itself—homogenized by systemic cycles of reproduction and reiteration. tattoo culture (walking upright), *Ally McBeal* (struggling with the heart), *South Park* (struggling with the mind), and *Fight Club* (warring with God). means and ends intersect as identical in a tautological tease. power/knowledge/body as a site of surveillance. visually significant. Marilyn Manson, Satan himself . . . rational, grounded, direct, compassionate. images and flow replace facts and frames. the spectacle girds and grows, like a virus whose sole goal is to replicate itself infinitely. supple rather than static. intellectual exploration. animated flashes/fighting, revival from commodity objectification, restoration from consuming to being, power as self-awareness and self-motivation. detournement: using preexisting images to create other works of media to subvert or even oppose the original piece. grotesque animation accents the head. associated with critiques of white feminism. ultimately impactful and provocative. themes of empowerment, equality, individuality, struggle. accepting at times an anti-feminist stance swirling in (potential) mental instability. renegades of the flesh as conformity, nonconformity, reclamation, collection. MEMES. movement, transitions, pacing, editing, music, sound effects. images as commodities. semiotics, signs, symbols, relationships . . . cultivate ideology and construct power. tattoo culture from peripheral depravity to mainstream decadence that displays decorated body images in shifting symbolic contexts, which in turn expose the power dimension. definitions focus on action and intention, but not aesthetics. audience participation: Time Warp dance, narrative props of rice, water, newspaper, hot dogs, candles, toast. ongoing truth negotiation. write the essential self (hopes, fears, thoughts, imaginings) onto the performative self. CHICKEEBOOMBOOM! together, mind and body, essence and performance surrender their separation and sculpt a soul that defines the self. what flows forth is an enriching and enlightening array of personalities that actualize rather than just articulate uniqueness of form and individuality of spirit, rendering the art of aesthetic, the emancipation of emotion, the clarity of childhood, and the reality of revolution

to be possible projects in everyday life. ultimately, the volatile veins arrive at a reflecting pool of introspection decorated with determination. SUBVERSIVE SUPREMACY.

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“The passion of an aesthete is absolutely inaccessible to the man of ordinary concepts, who calls a dog a dog and a spoon a spoon” (Huelsenbeck, 1981, p. 26). Sure: The table is a boat; now it is no longer worth the argument. As Green (1995, p. 21) recognizes, “Many of the features that distinguished Dada—abstractionism, primitivism, provocation, bluffs, arrogance, dandyish absurdism and assaults on meaning and language—had a longer history than might initially be supposed.” They also enjoy a long shelf life. Contemporary artistic adventures of found objects and upcycled movements in jewelry, clothing, and accessories echo aspects of the Dada “ready-made,” such as Duchamp’s *Bottle Rack*, “a manufactured commercial object from everyday life that he selected and exhibited under his own name, conferring on it the status of ‘sculpture,’ an anti-art and consequently dada gesture” (Motherwell & Flam, 1981, p. xxiii). Similar is Man Ray’s *8th Street*: while walking, he noticed a crushed tin can on 8th Street, picked it up, titled it, and thereby transformed it into art (Schwarz, 1973).

For Dada, abstract art is absolute honor, for “there is too little time to dress up in an ideology that might appeal to other people” (Huelsenbeck, 1981, p. 27). Those making visual art, teaching visual communication, and engaging in visual critique understand well Ball’s (1981, p. 52) acknowledgment that the “image differentiates us. Through the image we comprehend.” To excite continued inspiration, investigation, and exploration in visual communication, we might keep close Serner’s (1995, p. 159) sentiment from his “Last Loosening Manifesto”: “But you will only succeed if you have first made yourself ridiculous. Highly ridiculous. Terribly ridiculous. Ridiculous beyond all measure. So appallingly ridiculous that everything becomes equally ridiculous. That everyone falls metaphorically on his backside. And sneezes.” One hundred years and counting: VIVA DADA!!!

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